Spectacular Times

number six:
Food

Pocketbook Series

THE POLITICS
OF FOOD

The first recorded labour dispute involved slaves in Thebes, Egypt in 1153 BC. The action was taken in support of a demand for better food.

Of course, things are better now.....

Can you honestly say that your staff are totally satisfied after leaving your canteen? Are they quite justifiably, fed up to the teeth with what is being handed out? Take a good look.

Experience has taught us that providing a decent meal at work is an important job incentive. For the best evidence, you only have to look to other parts of Europe. There's often less industrial unrest, less staff absence and less changing around in jobs.

.....and we only had to negotiate for 3,000 years.

In the Society of the Spectacle the production and consumption of food is a first class example of the use of manipulation, centralism and illusion. The food industry has a problem – no matter how rich we become we can only eat so much. So if we cannot consume more food, we must be encouraged to consume more profitable foods.

It is difficult to see how Everyday Life is to be re-invented while the most fundamental requirement for the continuation of <u>any</u> kind of life remains a mystified commodity.

Buxted's latest invention is the "CHURKEY" - a young turkey, fattened to about the size of a broiler chicken and produced to killing weight in less than eight weeks. After killing, and before freezing, the birds are steeped for 24 hours in a broth brewed from spent battery birds. Buxted's managing director, Robin Pooley, describes the Churkey as:

> "a serious attempt by serious people to produce a new bird for which there is a genuine need."

The continued development of that-which-it-is-convenient-to-produce is justified by reference to the Spectacle of "consumer demand".

Large quantities of meat unfit for human consumption has been sold—and eaten—in London over the last three years. Raids on meat suppliers over the last few weeks have uncovered horses' heads in addition to large quantities of meat clearly unfit to eat. The meat is 'production meat' used in the manufacture of hamburgers and pies.

HUNDREDS of tons of contaminated meat, including kangaroo and donkey flesh, and beef from cancerous cows, have been blended into a wide range of convenience foods. This is not an isolated instance, as claimed by the food giant Walls last week: it has been a regular practice for the past five years.

On December 6 he raided the premises. Last week he described what he found.

"It was incredible. There was a cancerous cow carcase lumped together with horsemeat and God knows what. Pus, hair—the lot. We brought in a magistrate and there was no hesitation in condemning the lot—30 tons of it."

"It is a nationally organised racket, a national scandal, and there should be a national inquiry," said a spokesman for Bradford City Council, which is investigating how 70 tons of kangaroo meat originally intended for the petfood market ended up as hamburgers.

Statistics show that food poisoning in 1979 was the highest ever.

"The attitude which it demands..is.. passive acceptance." Debord

So is being a vegetarian difficult? Both Emma and David agreed that it was not, although David emphasised the trouble he has in storing all the food he wants. "My parents are violently opposed, so I have to do most of my own cooking.

..... a passive acceptance aggressively defended as a virtue.

Four ounces of red tomato flavouring agent No.562 will *"...standardise the flavour profile of tomato-containing products...and replace 100 lbs of tomato solids."*

Cyclamates were banned– but the research which led to this was paid for by the UK sugar industry.

"It was all very well to say 'DRINK ME', but the wise little Alice was not going to do that in a hurry. 'No, I'll look first,' she said,'and see whether it's marked 'POISON' or not.'"

A widely used additive is sodium nitrite which is put into nearly all bacon, ham, sausages, processed meat, fish and cheese. Sodium nitrite forms potent cancer-producing agents (nitrosamines). It is used to prevent botulism and microbial infections. There are safer alternatives but the industry prefers sodium nitrite - it stops meat turning grey with age, and keeps it looking pink and fresh until the day it is eaten.

"First we have to convince the people that good health isn't everything.

To prepare octopus, hold it under cold running water and, using a sharp knife, remove the beak and eyes, being careful not to pierce the ink sac if you intend to use the ink in cooking. Cut out the internal organs.

Turn the head inside out, cutting away any membranes. Remove and discard the yellowish pouch, any gelatinous pieces and the ink sac, if you are not using it. Squeeze out any blackish substance from the tentacles and rinse the octopus thoroughly.

Blanch the octopus for 5 minutes in boiling, salted water. Drain and refresh under cold running water.

Place the octopus on a large chopping board. Cut off the ends of the tentacles and, using a knife, peel off the skin. Rinse again and return the octopus to the chopping board. Using a mallet or heavy rolling pin, beat the octopus vigorously for about 5 minutes. Rinse the octopus again. The octopus is now ready to be cooked.

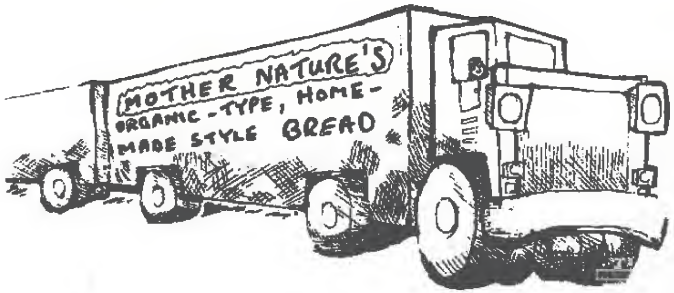
'To say mankind can survive on a handful of brown rice and bananas is reactionary.'
Paul Foot of SWP

What then should revolutionaries say?

The Wholefood Revolution.....

Factory bakers resisted the trend at first, but then realised they had to try to meet the demand for wholegrain products. Now many bread manufacturers and big store bakeries are using new technology to produce a nice, light wholemeal loaf which can be sold and wrapped like white bread.

Supermarkets have been energetic in promoting these loaves.



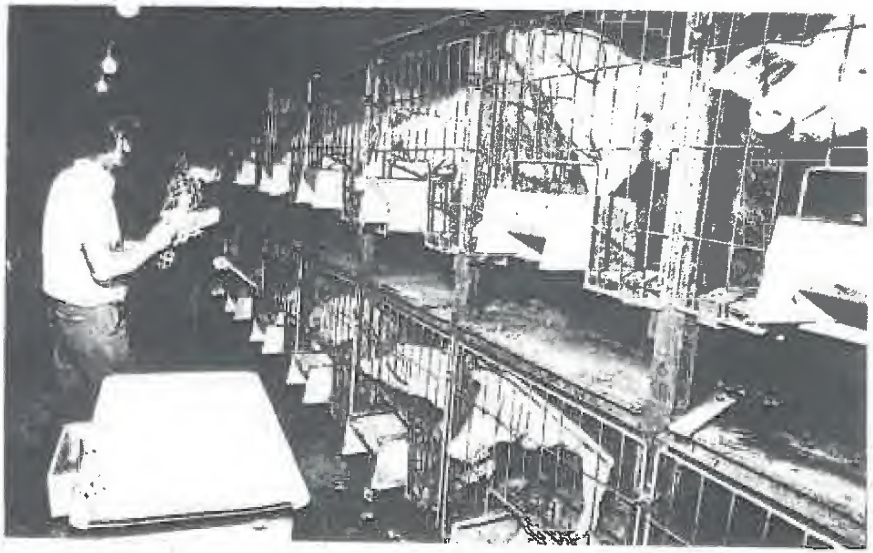
Contains many additives which show up in even plastic sponge-like texture that you associate with white bread. Texture leathery and very even.

A very boring bread. Toasted: thickness of the slice reduced to approx ¼in.

Malty smell. Texture soft and pappy. Nice flavour. Toasted: shrivelled to nothing.

Rubbery and tasteless. Could only taste butter. Like cardboard. Toasted: flavour improved but bulk shrivelled to razor blade thinness when spread.

.....not lost – recuperated.



Of all the meat we eat, it's the chicken, pork and veal products that are produced by factory farming. Of the 300,000 pigs slaughtered every week in Britain, over 70% are grown in factory farms after being weaned from mothers who live their lives as pork-producing machines in concrete floored pens so small they cannot lie down or turn. Once weaned, the pigs are usually fattened to 100 pounds, then removed from the nursery cages to the slightly larger fattening cages.

The Mormon Church in Britain plans to move into battery farming as the first step towards establishing a national network of farms, canneries and factories by 1984 to provide work and food for 3,500 of its members.

Among the household names who have a finger in factory farming are the Imperial Group who own Buxted, Unilever and Dalgetys (who own Spillers and Dean Farm Eggs). Only a handful of these ventures are actually owned and run by small farmers.

New season's English lamb, the traditional Easter fare, is eaten at 12 to 20 weeks. As lamb is weaned at about 14 weeks, most Paschal lamb has never even tasted grass, far less gambolled in it.

Confronted with the fact that 3000 animals are killed for food in every minute of every working day in the United Kingdom,

"The plant at present kills and dresses about 74,000 broiler chickens each working day and, in the opinion of the veterinary officer, the company do all that is possible to treat the birds humanely.

On the kill line at the factory a great number of chickens had deformed or swollen legs and as they were put in the shackles the deformed legs would break in the workers' hands.

loss or downgrading of birds through dislocated backs and legs where they are trampled on because of overcrowding is more than compensated for by the extra profit from having more birds in the shed.

The continued exploitation of the consumer requires the total and unremitting exploitation of the consumed.

MONKEYS in a research project at Guy's Hospital are being fed Mars Bars to see how their teeth stand up to sugar.

But a Guy's Hospital photograph of the monkeys' diet has had the Mars Bar blacked out. This occurred at about the same time that Mars Ltd began funding the project last year.

The Mars Health Education Fund though, denies the link between sweets and tooth decay.

Three weeks ago *The Observer* reported that the Mars Health Education Fund had sponsored a dental handbook which was published by the General Dental Council. Mr John Farrell, the handbook's author, claimed that his text had been changed. After a debate within the General Dental Council, 8,000 copies of the handbook were withdrawn from sale and pulped.

During the 1960's the total assets owned by the bigger companies doubled while the number of such companies halved. By 1970, five firms or less controlled 90% or more of the following: sugar, breakfast cereals, soups, coffee, ice-cream, quick-frozen fish, frozen vegetables, self-raising flour and condensed milk. Even where no single company dominates there is little competition. In the case of bread, three companies supply 80% of the flour and two of them make well over half the bread we eat. They agree a high price for the flour so that other bakers cannot compete.

Rank Hovis McDougall and Associated British Foods produce almost two-thrids of British bread between them.

Company	*Percent sales*	
Unilever	*Margarine*	*70%*
Unilever	*Fish*	*63%*
Heinz	*Canned soup*	*63%*
Tate & Lyle	*Sugar*	*60%*
Kelloggs	*Breakfast cereal*	*56%*

Moore-Lappé cites two effects of the United States' mammoth US$13,000 million agricultural import bill: the expansion of cassava for export in Thailand and of beans for export in Chile. She points out that this is part of a worldwide trend, which she describes as the creation of "a global farm to serve a global supermarket". The driving force is the concentration of world food production and trade in very few corporate hands: five companies control 90 per cent of the world's grain trade, four corporations handle 90 per cent of the traffic in bananas. In the mid-60s the US Federal Trade Commission discovered that 0.2 per cent of all US food manufaturers controlled 50 per cent of the industry's assets and got 90 per cent of the profits.

How did they originate?
Where do they come from?
Why do we need them?
How much longer will they last?

With the mechanical-chemical process known as CBP (Chorleywood Baking Process), bread rises quickly: cutting the time needed to bake the bread cuts labour costs. In addition, the method enables the baker to use a weaker – and therefore cheaper – flour with more water added.

CBP produces about four per cent. more bread from the same materials as traditional methods. It has no crust and not much texture because it has to be under-baked. If it wasn't, the crumbs would jam up the slicing machine. And the consumer wouldn't be able to squeeze the loaf to see if it is 'fresh'.

Not that all brown loaves are necessarily 'good for you'; some brown bread is merely coloured by caramel to give it that healthy look.

Ever wondered why they call money "bread"?

In Thailand, it's โคคา-โคลา.

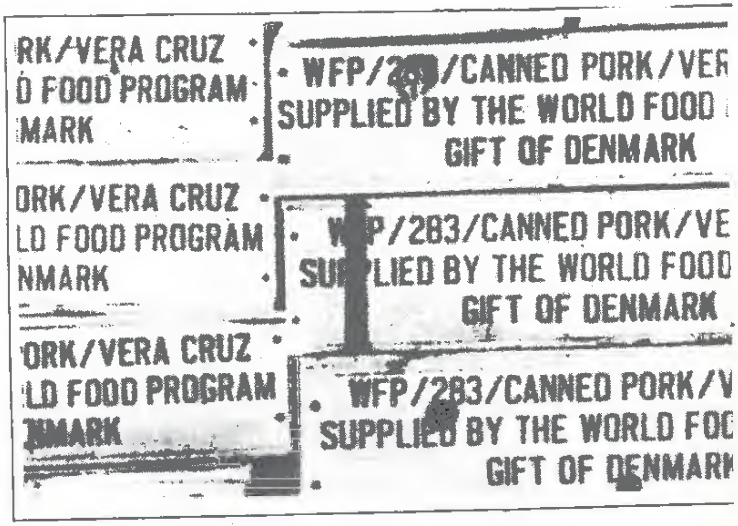
Moroccans call for كوكا كولا.

In 81 countries around the globe, busy people relish the pause for ice-cold Coca-Cola. It's the world's favorite way to refresh, for Coke gives a bit of quick energy ...and with as few calories as half an average, juicy grapefruit. No wonder Coke is the most asked-for soft drink in the world.

Saturday afternoon on the Avenue of Everlasting Peace, Peking. A soldier of the People's Liberation Army is showing his tiny son the latest marvel. Perched on the crossbar of his father's bike, the boy gazes up at the hoarding and repeats the strange new slogan: 'Coca Cola'.

"The basically tautological character of the spectacle flows from the simple fact that its means are at the same time its goal. It is the sun which never sets over the empire of modern passivity. It covers the entire surface of the world and bathes endlessly in its own glory."

Guy Debord



Pacific coast Latin Americans are frequently hungry and may suffer from protein deficiency. The local fishermen catch anchovies, but poor Latin Americans cannot afford to eat this high protein food. Instead the anchovies are exported to Denmark where they are fed to pigs. The Danes then send cans of pork as food aid to Latin America.

☐ Check here for general information about our unique programs for aiding impoverished children.

U.S. INCOME TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

A LINCOLNSHIRE FOOD MOUNTAIN. One of five ex-RAF hangars at Manby, near Grimsby, each containing 10,000 tonnes of barley. The EEC has 600 such mountains — today it hoards more than six million tonnes of grain, 350,000 tonnes of beef, 250,000 tonnes of skimmed milk, and 180,000 tonnes of butter. Storage costs alone are now running at £3,000 million a year.

BRITAIN'S financing of intensive meat and egg production in the Third World could be contributing to the serious grain shortages that have hit most poor countries.

The real concern, however, is over the amount of grain needed for battery units. Whereas free-range chickens in developing countries normally live on scraps, battery chickens have to be fed grain at regular intervals.

Mr Saouma said, developing countries would need to import 88 million tons of grain.

Only rich people in Third World countries can afford to buy the battery-produced meat and eggs.

It has also become common knowledge that the developed countries are devoting as much grain to animal feed as is jointly consumed by China and India, thereby dividing the nutritional yield of each hectare of cereals by five.

There is, inevitably, an EEC grain mountain. So far this year, 400,000 tonnes of British grain has been offered for sale into 'intervention'—the EEC system that buys up surplus to support the farmers and maintain a maximum market price.

Isn't this where we came in?

Once we have consumed the maximum amount of maximum profit food we are encouraged to buy the surplus as proxy consumers for those too poor to have a demand themselves. We give to charities who buy the market surplus to feed the poor. Aid and charity - in the society of the spectacle - are necessary to maintain high prices and a stable market. Thus the money from charitable donations and taxes is recycled back into the hands of capital — which at the same time disposes of its previously worthless surplus production.
Charities only attack the symptoms — if we really cared we would attack the disease.

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FROM THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT YOU

NAPALM

AND

AGENT ORANGE

Feeling guilty?
Fear not - we can offer a full range of starving kids for you to choose from! Full back-up service ensures complete emotional satisfaction. This unique scheme involves absolutely no change in your own life-style. Enjoy.

1 What kind of child would you like to help?
☐ Boy ☐ Girl ☐ Either

2 What geographical area are you interested in?
Urgent need exists in all the areas listed below. Select an area, or let us assign a child where the need is greatest.

- ☐ Where the need is greatest
- ☐ Africa
- ☐ Bangladesh
- ☐ Chicano (U.S.)
- ☐ Colombia
- ☐ Dominican Republic
- ☐ Honduras
- ☐ Indian (U.S.)
- ☐ Indonesia
- ☐ Inner Cities (U.S.)
- ☐ Israel
- ☐ Korea
- ☐ Lebanon
- ☐ Mediterranean
- ☐ Mexico
- ☐ Southern States (U.S.)
- ☐ Sri Lanka (Ceylon)

3 Would you like a picture of your sponsored child?
Shortly after we select a child for you, we can send you a photograph and brief personal history, if you desire.
☐ Yes ☐ No

4 Would you like to correspond with your sponsored child?
If desired, correspondence can help build a meaningful one-to-one relationship. Translations, where necessary, are supplied by Save the Children.
☐ Yes ☐ No

5 Would you like information about the child's community?
Several times a year you can receive detailed reports on community activities to benefit your sponsored child. These community reports show how your money is being used most effectively for permanent improvements to the child's environment—for health care, education, food production, nutrition, and community training. Would you like to receive such information?
☐ Yes ☐ No

NEW GROUP product manager at KP Foods is John Koster, previously with Kentucky Fried Children

Super Marketing

New plant varieties are bred to meet the dem-
-ands of agribusiness. F1 hybrids produce higher yields but to do so they need a high input of energy-expensive artificial fertil-
-izers, fungicides and insecticides. The seeds are expensive to produce and the plants crop simultaneously to meet the demands of mechan-
-ised farmers, freezer plants and canneries. Many of the older vegetable varieties - bred for flavour, disease resistance and to deliv-
-er fresh produce over an extended cropping season - are being deliberately extinguished. The EEC has already made illegal the sale of seeds of over 500 vegetable varieties - prov-
-en varieties bred to make the best use of local soil and weather conditions with a min-
-imum of expensive chemical aids. Few seed merchants now produce their own seed. Seeds are produced for them by specialist companies, some of which are owned by the multinational chemical corporations (who make fertilizers, insecticides,etc.). Choice is restricted to what is convenient to produce. For example, there are over 2,000 different varieties of apple in the U.K. alone. About 400 are grown commercially. The EEC would like to restrict this to just six varieties. A British apple distributor recently stated that the ideal would be just two varieties - a red apple and a green apple. They might even taste good, if you've nothing to compare them with.

Advertising and packaging reduces food production to a series of images - wheatfields, free range hens, contented cows, butterflies, bees and "summer goodness". Even the production of bread - one of this country's staple foods - has been so mystified that during the bakers strike, national newspapers and television stations had to give their readers and viewers instructions on how to make it.

Mistaking the Spectacle for reality we see famine, rising prices, butter "mountains" and milk "lakes" as natural phenomena, and not as things having a definite -and often deliberate- cause.

Vicar asks for prayer to stop rising prices

PROTECT YOURSELF NOW!

... against skyrocketing prices, massive unemployment, and severe shortages of the food which is **basic to the well-being of you and your family.** Look around! Would you have believed five years ago (or even one year ago!) what you know to be true today? Look at the world's economy. The political situation. Inflation. Can you say with certainty that times will improve? Or will they get even worse?

Judge for yourself: **Can you afford to wait and see?**

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We at The Survival Food Company believe that an investment in good, **natural**, nutritional food which will store for years is your best hedge against inflation and hard times. And we believe THE SIMPLER LIFE® RESERVE FOODS are **the best**, most healthful foods you can buy anywhere, at any price . . . because they're **all natural** . . . can be stored for years with no deterioration . . . are absolutely delicious . . . are incredibly economical . . . and are **quality guaranteed** by one of the world's most respected producers of nutritional foods.

A demand recuperated, a commodity maximized — organically grown wheat, canned and sold as a hedge against inflation.

Rome Diary

...There was yet another bang on Monday night, but it took the police an hour and a half to trace the bombers' target. It was the 'urban guerrillas' themselves who phoned to say that they had blown up seven of the biggest Roman salami manufacturer's trucks: 'This is "guerrilla communista", we have just struck that starver of people...'
This justification was intriguing: 'The control of food chains', say their leaflets, 'has become one of the areas of worst exploitation and control by the bosses of the proletarian masses'. For the first time they are using bombs for consumer protection. The guilty salami, they claim, is made of meat rejects 'and contains carcinogenous chemical additives which are fatal for the human organism'. New Statesman, 27.4.79

The demand for real food is a revolutionary demand.

From Ancient Rome to the present day it's the same old trick - 'Give them bread and give them circuses'.
Until the demystification of food is seen as one of our prime targets, we are condemned to make revolution between meals.

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